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Thoughts in Passing.

A REAL MARTYR is Otto F. Otepka, dismissed by the U.S. Department of State from his post as security officer.

His heinous offense, covered by the stock phrase "conduct unbecoming an officer" of the department, was that he gave "confidential" information to the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee. In other words, he disclosed to a small group of the people's elected representatives facts which his superiors, all of whom hold office by appointment, had determined they had no right to know.

This example of secretiveness shatters whatever vestiges of doubt may have remained with respect to the machinations carried on in the name of the American people by small groups of wilful, arrogant appointed officials who are answerable to no one except their political progenitors. And it explains in some measure at least the deplorable state of the nation's international relations.

Recent developments in South Viet Nam, including reduction in aid from this country at a time when surface indications were that a more realistic effort would be made to end the prolonged war with the communists, are a case in point. The inner circle has manipulated this situation in a manner which justifies the impression that even Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge, who is in the thick of things in that turbulent country is not fully informed of what is going on. The murders of President Diem and his brother by revolutionaries who have taken over South Viet Nam cannot be directly charged to the United States (it has been said that they were too well executed to have been the work of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency) but there is smug satisfaction in Washington over the elimination of these two troublesome characters. The unmistakable impression is that the Department of State, incapable of dealing with major problems in the normal channel of diplomacy, embraces bloodlettings as an alternative.

What has gone before in the form of reverses suffered by the United States throughout Latin America and what is happening today in the matter of alliances with other free nations are principally attributable to the mysterious and unexplained gyrations of the Department of State. "Untouchable" career men on the infamous fourth floor of that department have been repeatedly blamed for most of these blunders.

Unquestionably there is much in the field of diplomacy that cannot be freely divulged to the American people, albeit they have the right to know of situations and decisions of major proportions. The dismissal of a department aide for giving "secret" information to a group of United States senators points up a condition that is not only intolerable but fraught with peril.

There is no room in America for Kremlin-type centers of connivance.

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